THE CONCORD SAUNTERER

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Emerson has special talents unequalled. The divine in man has had no more easy, methodically distinct expression. His personal influence upon young persons greater than any man's. In his world every man would be a poet, Love would reign, Beauty would take place, Man and Nature would harmonize.

Thoreau's Journal, February 1846

THE CONCORD SAUNTERER

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Edited by Thomas Blanding

Consulting Editors: Malcolm Ferguson, John McAleer, Anne McGrath

So we saunter toward the Holy Land, till one day the sun shall shine more brightly than ever he has done, shall perchance shine into our minds and hearts, and light up our whole lives with a great awakening light, as warm and serene and golden as on a bank-side in autumn.

The Thoreau Foundation, Inc., is a small, non-profit public organization formed in 1966 by Concordians who believed that there should be a Thoreau Center in the town where the author-naturalist-philosopher was born and died.

The Thoreau Lyceum is that Center. Its headquarters are in a 19th-century shingled house on the southern extension of Belknap Street, across the railroad tracks, next to the lot on which the Thoreau family's "Texas House" stood. The building houses an exhibit area with displays of Thoreau memorabilia, including one of his desks, the Ricketson bust and bas-relief, original survey maps and manuscripts, lead pencils made in the family business, Indian artifacts, maps and photographs of Thoreau Country. A replica of the Walden House has been built behind the Lyceum.

Membership in the Lyceum is open to the public and is international. Its privileges include free admission to the buildings for members and guests, use of the research library and a subscription to The Concord Saunterer. Booklists of titles carried in the specialized Thoreau Book Shop and membership applications may be had by writing:

Mrs. Thomas W. McGrath, Curator
The Thoreau Lyceum
156 Belknap Street
Concord, Massachusetts 01742

THE EDITOR'S ENTRY

So long has our curator stood by our back door, presenting our premises to the public, that by now "The Curator's Corner" is a familiar and friendly station to Concord saunterers. And, since everything in Transcendentalism works by correspondences, the curator's counterpart (on paper, that is) takes his post on this page. Enters the editor by "The Editor's Entry."

"History," says Thoreau, "has not been so truthfully or livingly, convincingly, written but that we still need the evidence, the oral testimony of an eye-witness." The Saunterer recalls Frank B. Sanborn, author of "Emerson and His Friends in Concord," the lead article in New England Magazine for December 1890 (3: 410-431): He was a New Hampshire boy, born in 1831, and a late-comer to Concord in the mid-1850s; he won a wedge in the Sage's circle by introducing into it Captain John Brown of Osawatomie fame and Harpers Ferry destiny; he spent sixty years improving Concord history and his place in it in hundreds of articles and a score of books; he was no born Transcendentalist but a baptized one--"I have skated with Emerson on Walden Pond, and with Thoreau on the Musketaquid; have swum with Alcott in the green water of Thoreau's Cove, and with Thoreau himself in the Assabet; with Channing in every stream and lake of Concord."

"Decidedly sawdustish!" snipes Dr. Samuel Arthur Jones, a rising Thoreau researcher who codgerly hates Sanborn. That New England Magazine piece is just his latest form of insincerity (and inaccuracy). Imagine! Using three of Fred Hosmer's photographs without acknowledgment! Only Florence Richardson's drawings redeem the sawdust.

By the time "Emerson and His Friends in Concord" appeared in the Yankee Magazine of that day, New England Transcendentalism was New England nostalgia. Emerson had been dead eight years, Thoreau twenty-eight. Hawthorne and Alcott too had quit the scene--and Channing was avoiding it (next summer he would move into Sanborn's attic). Their heyday had been history half a century. Sanborn, who seems to have been attached to the Transcendentalists by fame, affection, and philosophy, in that order, read the times and wrote for them instead of the eternities. Nevertheless, he could turn a pretty piece of propaganda for a never-lost-cause. "We will not complain of absurd and contradictory statements," says Thoreau, "but be thankful that we have any." Came Christmas 1890, Sanborn kept the home fires burning.

Sanborn did not turn to dust until 1917. In Concord you still meet memories of him. (I know a wide-eyed schoolgirl remembers his wide-angled gait.) In New Hampshire someone remembers his last visit to their birthplace, Hampton Falls, in 1916. She reminisces for this issue. He was finishing his last life of Thoreau and ruminating a history of Hampton Falls.

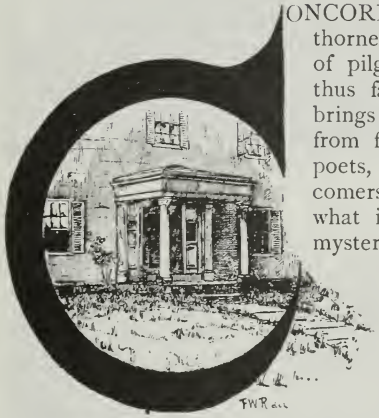
The loveliest of all laments for Thoreau is Louisa May Alcott's poem, "Thoreau's Flute," published under the auspices of the Hawthornes in the September 1863 Atlantic Monthly. It is her confident reply to her father's prophecy in the April 1862 Atlantic: "And when he goes hence, then Pan is dead, and Nature ailing throughout." Francis Dedmond, one of the most active (and accurate) Thoreau researchers, adds two letters by Sophia Hawthorne to the tale.

From a crayon drawing by Rowse, in the possession of Prof. Charles Eliot Norton.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

EMERSON AND HIS FRIENDS IN CONCORD.

By Frank B. Sanborn.



CONCORD, the home of Emerson and Alcott, of Hawthorne and Thoreau, becomes more and more a place of pilgrimage for those who appreciate what is best, thus far, in American literature. Every day, almost, brings to that plain Massachusetts town these pilgrims from far and near, — old lovers of the place and its poets, returning to their first love, — or else new comers, who have heard of Concord, and wish to see what it is like. Who can explain the geographical mystery of genius, or measure its attractive and consecrating force? We visit the slender and sluggish Avon winding through green meadows, among elms and willows, or twining round the base of wooded heights crowned with an old castle, or a church-tower, — yet what charms us is not the beauty of the scenery, lovely as that is, — we are drawn thither by the memory of Shakespeare, who rambled in these meadows, sailed on this stream, and made love amid these groves of oak and elm. So is it with the quiet loveliness of Concord,

"Its silver lakes that unexhausted gleam,
And peaceful woods beside the cottage door."

We value these not so much for their own grace and charm, as for the pleasure they gave to Emerson and his friends, who have made the name of Concord as famous in America as Stratford is in England. Most of all do we think of Emerson there, — since to him more than to all the rest does the town owe its celebrity, and by him has its landscape best been painted in memorable words:

"For me in showers, in sweeping showers the Spring
Visits the valley, — break away the clouds, —
I bathe in the morn's soft and silvered air;
And loiter willing by yon loitering stream.
Sparrows far off, and nearer April's bird,
Blue-coated, flying before from tree to tree,
Courageous sings a delicate overture,
To lead the tardy concert of the year.

* * * "Then flows amain
The surge of summer's beauty; dell and crag,
Hollow and lake, hillside and pine arcade
Are touched with genius. Yonder ragged cliff
Has thousand faces in a thousand hours.

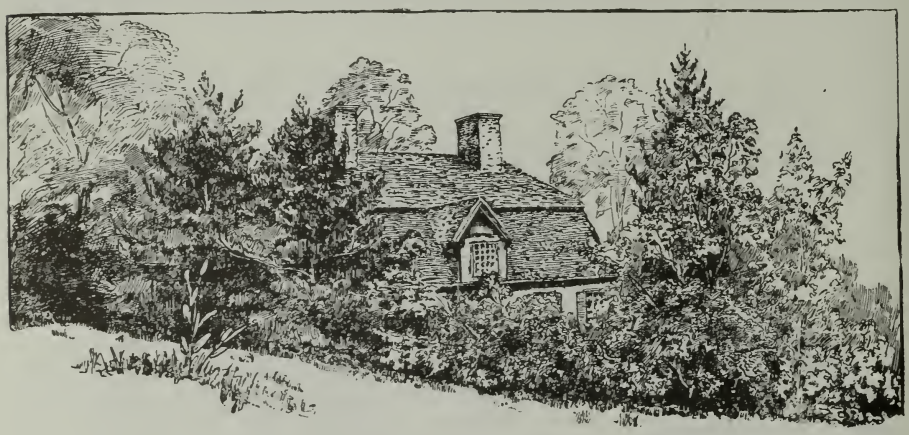
* * * * * * * *

"I am a willow of the wilderness,
Loving the wind that bent me. All my hurts
My garden spade can heal. A woodland walk,
A quest of river grapes, a mocking thrush,
A wild rose or rock-loving columbine
Salve my worst wounds." [1]

These pictures, and countless more from Emerson's pen, not only describe the scenes amid which he lived for half a century, but show us, by literal record or glancing allusion, his whole way of life

[1] Emerson's "Musketaquid."

there. He did not spend so many hours of the day abroad in the woods and fields as Thoreau or Wordsworth did, but hardly any day failed to see him wandering to his numerous and familiar haunts, until the short illness of which he died kept



The Old Manse, from the Battle Ground.

him within doors. And with him much of the charm of Concord scenery died also, —

> "Now younger pilgrims find the stream,
> The willows and the vine;
> But aye to me the happiest seem
> To draw the dregs of wine."

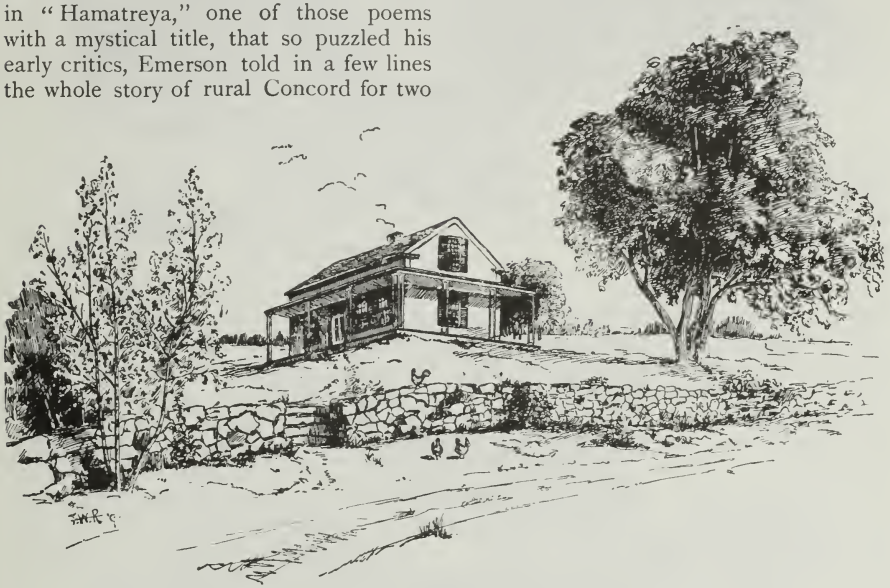
Emerson had visited Concord often as a child to see his relatives in the Old Manse, which his grandfather built; had been carried there as to a city of refuge, with his mother and brothers, in the hard winter of 1814–15; had been a schoolboy, a theological student and a youthful preacher there, before he made it his abode in 1834, the year after his return from his first tour in Europe. It was ancestral ground to him, though his family had small possessions therein, but his affection and his poetic imagination gave him indefeasible ownership between the soil and the sky, according to the tenure of Roman law, — as he intimated some years afterward: —

> "Knows he who tills this lonely field
> To reap its scanty corn,
> What mystic fruit its acres yield
> At midnight and at morn?"

This field was on the south bank of the Concord River, a short half mile below the Old Manse, and as far beyond that eastern "hilltop over against my house," from which Emerson saw "the spectacle of morning from daybreak to sunrise, with emotions which an angel might share." It was called "Peter's Field" from its dusky occupant, one Peter, who had succeeded to Cæsar Robbins — that other African who gave his name to the neighboring wood. Along this river bank above the great meadows, and through the wood, in the rear of the pine-crowned ridge where his grave is now seen, Emerson had one of his favorite walks — extending as far eastward as to "Copan" a small peninsula thrust out into the meadow, on which grew oak trees in fantastic forms that suggested to Ellery Channing the idols of Palenque and Copan in Central America. This region was one of the earliest frequented by Emerson, when his four brothers, William, Edward, Bulkeley and Charles, "came with him to the wood."

Two of these dear brothers, and the most brilliant, Edward and Charles, had died before 1838, when that pathetic poem, "The Dirge," was written. They were the earliest of Emerson's Concord friends, and those for whom his attachment was the strongest; they gave to the plain and homely landscape a tinge of romance which it had not before, and which it has never since lost. Yet was there always something romantic about the township — from its first history, through whose twilight glance dimly In-

dian chieftains and a forest-queen, Tahattawan, with her fortress on Nashawtuc — down through the time of Simon Willard, the Indian-fighter, and Peter Bulkeley, the devout pastor, to the day when King George's red coats, recoiling from the musketry of the minute men at the Bridge, fled from beneath the window of Parson Emerson, in the Old Manse, down the Lexington road, to Merriam's Corner, and Menotomy, and checked not their flight till they were safe in Boston. Now whatever was poetical in the aspect or the annals of Concord, Emerson had early traced and cherished — to appear afterward in his verse or prose, oftentimes where the reader least looks for it. Thus in "Hamatreya," one of those poems with a mystical title, that so puzzled his early critics, Emerson told in a few lines the whole story of rural Concord for two



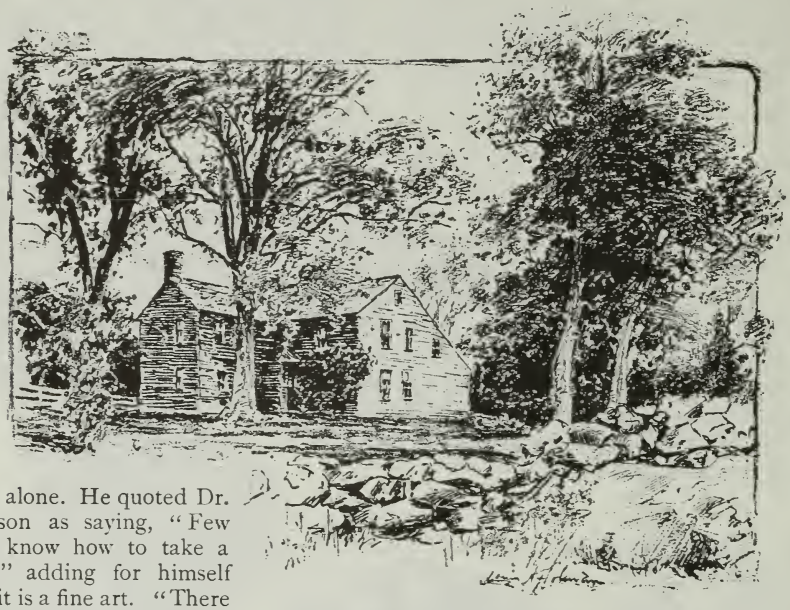
"The Lonely Cottage on the Hill."

centuries, — beginning with a bead-roll of the names of the English colonists there :

"Bulkeley, Hunt, Willard, Hosmer, Merriam, Flint,
Possessed the land which rendered to their toil
Hay, corn, roots, hemp, flax, apples, wool and wood.
Where are these men? Asleep beneath their ground,
And strangers, fond as they, their furrows plow.
Earth laughs in flowers to see her boastful boys
Earth-proud, proud of the earth which is not theirs;
Who steer the plow, but cannot steer their feet
Clear of the grave.
They added ridge to valley, brook to pond,
And sighed for all that bounded their domain;
Ah, the hot owner sees not Death, who adds
Him to his land, a lump of mould the more."

Notwithstanding this discouragement of ownership, Emerson, with that beautiful inconsistency which is the key to his whole character, became a landowner in Concord, and gloried thereat. In one of his hundred lectures before the Lyceum there (in December, 1857), I heard him say : "The place where a thoughtful man in the country feels the joy of eminent domain is his wood lot. If he suffer from accident or low spirits, his spirits rise when he enters it. I could not chide the citizen who should ruin himself to buy a patch of heavy oak timber. I admire in trees the creation of property so clean of tears, of crime, even of care. They grow at nobody's cost, and for everybody's comfort. When Nero advertised for a new luxury, a walk in the woods should have been offered. I think no pursuit has more breath of immortality in it. 'Tis one of the secrets for dodging old age ; for Nature makes a like impression on age as on youth. It is the best of humanity that goes out to walk. In happy hours all affairs may wisely be post-

poned for this." Emerson acted upon this rule, and perambulated the roads and wood-paths of Concord for many years, — sometimes with a companion, but more often alone. He quoted Dr. Johnson as saying, "Few men know how to take a walk," adding for himself that it is a fine art. "There are degrees of proficiency, and we distinguish the professors from the apprentices. The qualifications are endurance, plain clothes, old shoes, an eye for nature, good humor, vast curiosity, good speech, good silence, and nothing too much. We have the finest climate in the world for this purpose; if we have coarse days, and dog-days, and white days, we have also yellow days, and crystal days,— days neither hot nor cold, but the perfection of temperature. The world has nothing to offer more rich than the days that October always brings us, when after the first frosts, a steady shower of gold falls in the strong south wind, from the maples and hickories. And in summer we have scores of days, when the heat is so rich, yet so tempered, that it is delicious to live. For walking you must have a broken country, neither flat, like the prairie, nor precipitous like New Hampshire. The more reason we have to be content with the felicity of our slopes in Massachusetts, — rocky, broken and surprising, but without this Alpine inconveniency."



The Edmund Hosmer Place.

Of all the companions with whom Emerson rambled abroad, none had a surer instinct for scenery and impressions than Ellery Channing. Describing an afternoon with him in October, 1848, Emerson said: "In walking with Ellery you shall always see what was never before shown to the eye of man. We struck across an orchard to a steep hill of the right New Hampshire slope, newly cleared of wood, and came presently into rudest woodland landscapes, unknown, undescribed, and hitherto *unwalked* by us Saturday afternoon professors. The sun was setting behind terraces of pines, disposed in groups unimaginable by landscape gardeners. Through a clump of apple-trees, over a long ridge with fair outsight of the river, and across the Nat-Meadow Brook, we came out upon the banks of the river just below James Brown's. (This is a little southwest of the village, half-way from the town square to White Pond.) Ellery proposed that we should send the Horticultural Society our notes, — 'Took an apple near the White Pond fork of the Duganne trail, an apple of the *Beware-of-This* variety, — a

true *Touch-me-if-you-Dare, — Seek-no-further-of-This.*' We had much talk of books and lands, and arts and farmers."

The farmers of Concord, to be sure, were a frequent theme with these professional walkers, who crossed their fields, leaped their fences, and gathered new and strange fruits from the wild trees of their pastures. These farms which make up the town, are now but a small part of that demesne of the mind which goes by the name of Concord. All at once their "sitfast acres," as Emerson called them, began to yield poets and philosophers, whose lines have gone forth unto the ends of the earth. Or, as our poet said to the farmers about him:

"One harvest from your field
Homeward brought the oxen strong;
A second crop those acres yield
Which I gather in a song."

thorne, Channing or some other holds the pen. From his hill, Ponkawtasset, in 1845, Ellery Channing looking down on the river and its intervale, thus contributed his chapter to the farmers' chronicle:

"In my small cottage on the lonely hill,
Where like a hermit I must bide my time,
Surrounded by a landscape lying still
All seasons through, as in the winter's prime,—
Rude and as homely as these verses chime,—
I have a satisfaction which no king
Has often felt — or Fortune's happier thing.

"For all about me live New England men,
Their humble houses meet my daily gaze,—
The children of this land, where life again
Flows like a great stream in sunshiny ways;
This is a joy — to know them — and my days
Are filled with love to meditate on them,
These native gentlemen on Nature's hem.

"This man takes pleasure o'er the crackling fire;
His glittering axe subdued the monarch oak;
He earned the cheerful blaze by something higher
Than pensioned blows, — he owned the tree he stroke,
And knows the value of the distant smoke,
When he returns at night, his labor done,
Matched in his action with the long day's sun.

The Samuel Hoar Place.

It is this aftermath of the Concord meadows that now concerns mankind more than all the harvests that went before or shall come after. And yet the farmer has his place of honor in the song and the story, whether Emerson or Hawthorne, Channing or some other holds the pen. From his hill, Ponkawtasset, in 1845, Ellery Channing looking down on the river and its intervale, thus contributed his chapter to the farmers' chronicle:

It is in this idealizing manner that the

Concord authors speak of their neighbors who own and till the soil, — and so there has been a greater affinity here between the man with the hoe and the man with the pen, than in most places. These authors also each took his turn at the plow or the spade, or some other farm-tool; and I have seen Alcott hoeing in his garden, and Emerson up in an apple-tree, with saw and shears, pruning the branches. Hawthorne milked refractory cows at Brook Farm, and wore his woollen frock at the Old Manse. Thoreau has described his own farm labor, and Channing, in his "Woodman," pictures the scenes of that winter when he chopped trees in a Concord wood lot. Before that he had split rails on an Illinois prairie, and lived in a log hut there. But they could all see the other side of the farmer's life — such golden opportunities and such trivial results — as in the life of other men. In a passage from his Journal, which Channing has copied in his life of Thoreau, Emerson says, "There below are those farms, but the life of farmers is unpoetic. The life of labor does not make men, but drudges. The farmer is an enchanted laborer, who, after toiling his brains out, sacrificing religion, love, hope, courage, to toil, turns out a bankrupt, as well as the shopman." This was the reverse of the shield. Yet his neighbor and friend for many years was a farmer, — Edmund Hosmer, whose picturesque dwelling by the river is here represented, and over whose well-tilled acres Emerson was fond of walking and of leading his companions.

Thoreau's Birth-place.

I suppose that it was with Hosmer in mind that Emerson wrote for his unfinished poem of "Saadi," those lines on Hassan, the camel-driver, which Channing, in his life of Thoreau, was the first to publish :

> "Said Saadi, — When I stood before
> Hassan, the camel-driver's door,
> I scorned the fame of Timour brave;
> Timour to Hassan was a slave,
> In every glance of Hassan's eye
> I read rich years of victory;

And I, who cower mean and small
In the frequent interval
When wisdom not with me resides,
Worship Toil's wisdom that abides!
I shunned his eyes — the faithful man's,
I shunned the toiling Hassan's glance."

At the other extreme of the social scale, yet not many generations removed from the toiling farmer, stood the family of Samuel Hoar, who had married a daughter of Roger Sherman, (the Connecticut statesman, bred a shoemaker) and who stood in Emerson's mind for something consular and generous, as indeed he was. His daughter, Miss Elizabeth Hoar, who would have married Charles Emerson, but for his early death, was one of the dearest of Emerson's Concord friends, and his counsellor in many matters, intellectual and spiritual. He called her "Elizabeth the Wise," and praised her cheerful outlook on life, the admirable fairness of her mind, and her true and delicate sensibility. One distinction made by her and cited by Mr. Cabot, though it has the advantage of being reported in Emerson's exquisite diction, should be given here, to show the quality of her intelligence: "Elizabeth defined common sense as the perception of the inevitable laws of existence. The philosophers considered only such laws as could be stated; but sensible men those also which could not be stated." This recalls the saying ascribed to Bacon, "Manifest virtues procure reputation; occult ones procure fortune." Miss Hoar lived with her father in his conspicuous house on the village street, of which a sketch is here given; she accompanied him to South Carolina in 1844, and was

The Thoreau-Alcott House.

banished with him from that ungenerous State, which in its love of human slavery, forgot its own canons of courtesy. This drew from Emerson the remark, — "There is but one man in South Carolina, as far as I can see; the rest are but repeaters of his mind," — and that man, of course, was Calhoun. Samuel Hoar died in 1856; Elizabeth, in 1880; of her brothers, one (Edward) was the companion of Thoreau in some of his excursions; the others are Judge Hoar and Senator Hoar. Their mother it was, who said of Thoreau: "He talks about Nature just as if she had been born and brought up in Concord."

Perhaps Nature had that birth and training, — it was a good place for her. But Henry Thoreau certainly was born and bred in the town, of which Elizabeth Hoar said, "Concord is his monument, adorned with inscriptions by his own hand." He was born in the old-fashioned house which Miss Richardson's sketch has restored to its primitive aspect, — for

though standing yet, it has been removed, after the Concord fashion, to another site, and has lost the quaint sloping roof, which gave it an old-world character, like the similar farmhouse in Torrington, Ct., where John Brown was born. This "Minot house" (for Thoreau was born in the home of his maternal grandmother, Mrs. Minot, in July, 1817,) stood on the right hand of the "Virginia Road," as you come from Lexington to Concord by that route, — "an old-fashioned, winding, at length deserted pathway." Channing calls it, — "the more smiling for its forked orchards, tumbling walls, and mossy great tract sometimes called 'Bedford levels,' where rises the Shawsheen river." Thoreau only lived in this house eight months, yet such was his memory that he could remember a flock of ducks which his baby eyes rested on there. As a child he was next brought to the village of Concord — from which his birthplace is distant more than a mile to the northeast — and in that village and its environing woods, he lived nearly all his life. He died in the Alcott-Thoreau house on the village street, half-way between the river bank and the Fitchburg railroad, in May, 1862. The trees around this house, as

The Orchard House, Mr. Alcott's Earlier Concord Home.

banks." It occupied a low knoll, overlooking a wide region of tame or wild country; "about the house are pleasant, sunny meadows, deep with their beds of peat, so cheering with its homely, hearthlike fragrance; and in front run a constant stream through the centre of that shown in the engraving, were nearly all planted by Thoreau; the projecting L with the chimney contained, in its upper story, the shop where the Thoreau family made lead pencils, and prepared plumbago for electrotyping,—which was the modest bread-winning occupation of

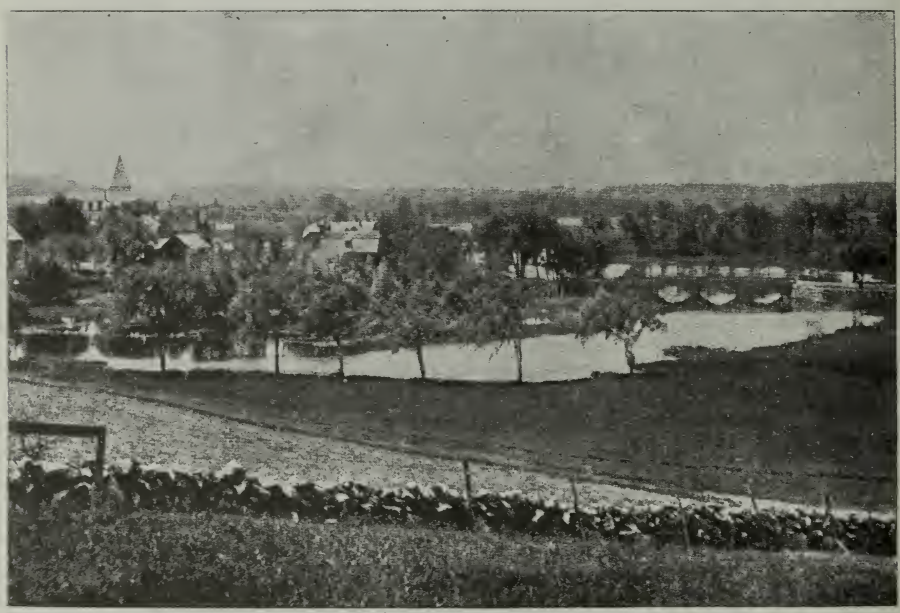
Henry Thoreau's father, and which he handed down to his children. This house was purchased by Louisa Alcott, in 1877, after the death of Sophia Thoreau, the last of the children, and it was the home of the Alcott family for nearly ten years. Mrs. Alcott died there in October, 1877, and Mr. Alcott was there attacked in October, 1882, with the paralytic stroke from which he never fully recovered. He left this house in 1886, and died in Boston, March, 1888. The house stands on the south side of the street, facing the north, and directly opposite, during Thoreau's lifetime, stood the house of Ellery Channing, whose garden ran to the river bank; and there under a rank of tall willows, Thoreau kept his last boat. His first boat, with which he and his brother John sailed down the Concord River and up the Merrimack, in 1839, had been made over to Hawthorne in 1843, and was that in which Hawthorne and Channing made their excursions up the Assabet, as described in "Mosses from an Old Manse."

View from Eastern Hill.

When, in October, 1834, Emerson came to reside with his mother in the Old Manse, Thoreau, a lad of seventeen, was at Harvard College, where he graduated in 1837; Alcott was newly returned from Philadelphia to Boston, to begin there his famous and unfortunate Temple School; Hawthorne had not emerged from his dim chamber at Salem, where he wrote tales, and waited for the age to find him out; and Channing was a lad of sixteen in Boston, having left the Round Hill School at Northampton, where he had for fellow-pupils, much older than himself, Motley, the historian, and T. G. Appleton, the wit of Boston. Emerson himself was at that time but one and thirty; Alcott, thirty-five; Hawthorne, thirty. Thoreau was native to Concord, and Emerson had ancestral roots there; but it was partly chance and partly mutual attraction which brought these friends all together by the winding river, in 1842. Emerson had thought of a possible retreat to the Berkshire hills, or even to the Maine woods; and when in 1834-5 he became engaged to Miss Jackson, of Plymouth, she sought to fix his residence in that town. His reply is worth noting, as it indicates how early he had chosen the vocation of poet. He wrote in the spring of 1835: "I am born a poet, — of a low class, without doubt, yet a poet. That is my nature and vocation. My singing, be sure, is

very husky, and is for the most part, in prose. Still, I am a poet, in the sense of a perceiver and dear lover of the harmonies that are in the soul and in matter. A sunset, a snowstorm, a forest, a certain river-view, are more to me than many friends, and do ordinarily divide my day with my books. Wherever I go, therefore, I guard and study my rambling propensities. Now Concord is only one of a hundred towns in which I could find these necessary objects, but Plymouth, I fear, is not one. Plymouth is streets." This was conclusive, and Concord was chosen. So was the site of their new house, — for in April, 1835, he wrote to his brother in New York; — "I hope to hire a house and set up a fireside next September. Perhaps Charles, also; and a year hence shall we not build a house on Grandfather's hill, facing Wachusett, Monadnoc, and the setting sun?" This was the "Eastern Hill," opposite the Old Manse (for "Grandfather" was Dr. Ripley, the old minister, who lived there) — a place sacred to the brothers. "I went Sunday evening, at sundown," says Emerson's Journal, "to the top of Dr. Ripley's hill, and renewed my vows to the genius of that place. Somewhat of awe, somewhat grand and solemn, mingled with the beauty that shined afar, around. I beheld the river, like God's love, journeying out of the gray past into the green future." In some verses of the same period, but little known, he gives this companion picture of sunrise:

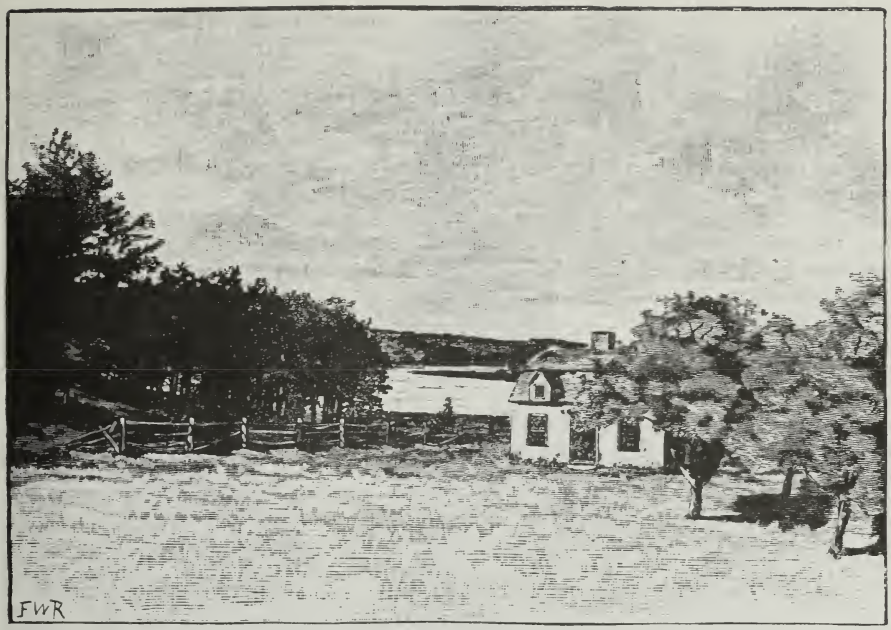
"Stand upon this pasture hill,
Face the Eastern star, until
The slow eye of heaven shall show
The world above, the world below.
Behold the miracle!
Thou saw'st but now the twilight sad,
And stood beneath the firmament
A watchman in a dark gray tent,
Waiting till God create the Earth, —



Concord River.

Behold the new majestic birth!
Sleeps the vast East in pleasèd peace,
Up the far mountain walls, the streams increase,
Inundating the heaven
With spouting streams and waves of light,
Which round the floating isles unite."

Here the verse is unfinished, and even the thought is halting or redundant, — but the picture is impressive. Our artist has



The Baker Farm.

given the present slope and vestment of this hill, looking towards "the green Musketaquid," and across it to the opposite slope of Ponkawtasset, where afterwards stood Channing's "small cottage on the lonely hill." The projected house was never built, for Emerson bought a house elsewhere, and Charles Emerson died in May, 1836.

Already in 1834 had Emerson's first book, "Nature," begun to take form, and it is traditional that it was mainly written in the Old Manse. It came out anonymously, and when the inquiry was made in 1836, "Who is the author of Nature?" some wit had his answer ready — "God and Waldo Emerson." With this little book New England Transcendentalism was introduced to the world, — not, as Emerson playfully said afterward, "as a known and fixed element like salt or meal," — but as a vivid and rather indefinite potentiality. Yet, such as it was, it had a long career and noteworthy results. In consequence, partly, of Emerson's marriage in Plymouth, for all practical purposes thereafter, Concord and Plymouth were the two shire-towns of Transcendentalism; and though Alcott, Emerson, Channing, and Thoreau were more at home in Concord, they were familiar with Plymouth, too — its Pilgrim Rock, its Hillside garden, its warm, sandy wood roads (warm in winter and cool in summer), and its breezy Island out in the bay. It was while preaching and lecturing at Plymouth in 1833–4, that Emerson became the lover and the betrothed of Miss Jackson (whom he married in September, 1835), and it was one of the towns where he continued to lecture for years. Marston Watson, of Plymouth, who was at Harvard College with Thoreau, and who, after graduating in 1838, took to gardening and tree-planting on a hillside of his native town, was one of the Transcendental circle, and made his country house of Hillside a resort for the brethren of the faith. Alcott thus describes the spot, in a sonnet to Watson:

"Thou, better taught, on worthiest aims intent,
Short distance from the Pilgrim's sea-washed street
Thine orchard planted; grove and garden there
And sheltering coppice hide thy mansion neat,
By winding alley reached, and gay parterre;

Where cordial welcome chosen friends shall meet
From courteous host and graceful lady fair;
Then thy choice fruit we taste, thy wisdom hived,
England's rare Evelyn in thee revived."

It once happened that Alcott and Thoreau spent some days together at Hillside, and in their walks through the surrounding wood they encountered the remains of a dead hog — his white, firm jawbone, and his bristles quite untouched by decay. "You see," said Thoreau to his vegetarian friend, "here is something that succeeded, besides spirituality and thought, — here is the tough child of nature,"— and they fell into high converse respecting the bristly darling of the great mother. Returning to Concord (this was in April, 1858) Thoreau wrote to Watson: "Is the mystery of the hog's bristles cleared up? and with it that of our life? It is the one question, to the exclusion of all other interests. Is Nature as full of vigor to your eyes as ever, or do you detect some falling off, at last? What a prospect you can get every morning, from the hilltop east of your house! I think that even the heathen that I am, I could say, or sing, or dance morning prayers there of some kind."

So it seems that the Transcendentalists, like the Zoroastrians, worshipped on the hilltops, and liked each to have one of his own; Emerson, as we saw, had early celebrated his Eastern hill; Channing had his cottage on the hill; Alcott, when he laid out the estate which Hawthorne afterwards occupied, called it "Hillside," and resorted to its ridge for the morning and evening view; while Thoreau, in his long rambles, had many hilltops for his worship. One of these, (whimsically called *Conantum* by Channing, because it was part of the large farm of Eben

The Home of Emerson.

CONANTUM AND FAIRHAVEN BAY.

Conant) looks down upon Fairhaven Bay and Baker Farm, — places of much resort in the days that we speak of.

The first walk I ever took with Emerson was to Walden, in 1854; and one of the first after I came to live in Concord in 1855, was to Baker Farm, beyond Walden, — a tract of meadow, upland, orchard and woodland, lying on the northeast side of Fairhaven Bay, opposite Conantum, and running down, with a fair lawn, along a brook, to that lovely water. It is much changed now, — the "trivial cabin," where Thoreau found the Irish family of John Field, has long since gone to destruction, and a great brick and stone villa, with a high terrace in front, and huge stables on the ridge behind, now looks out upon Fairhaven, and the scene that was so lovely in Thoreau's and Channing's time. It was Channing who, in 1847, or thereabout, made the verses which Thoreau quotes in his chapter on Baker Farm in "Walden." "My way," says Thoreau, "as I set out one afternoon to go a-fishing to Fairhaven, through the woods, led through Pleasant Meadow, an adjunct of the Baker Farm, that retreat of which a poet has since sung, beginning,—

"Thy entry is a pleasant field
Which some mossy fruit-trees yield
Partly to a ruddy brook,
By gliding musquash undertook,
And mercurial trout
Darting about."

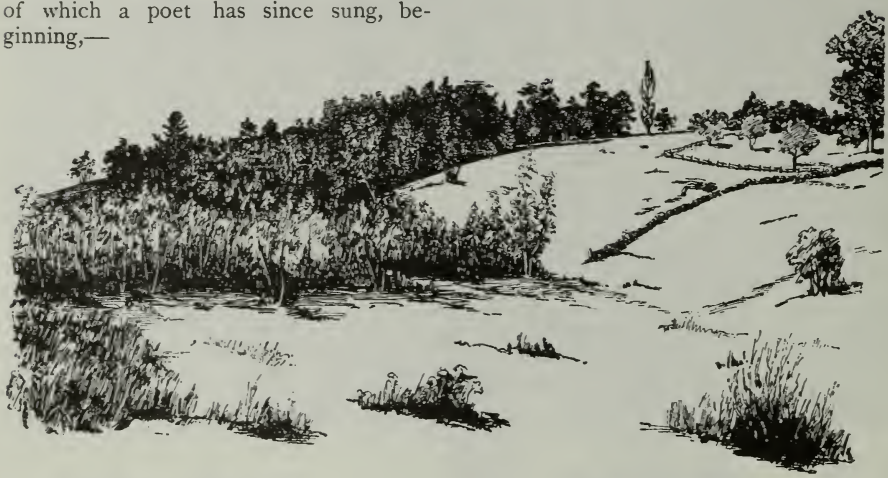
Thoreau omits most of this singular poem, which so well paints the landscape as Emerson showed it to me, in that afternoon of May, 1855, when we wandered through it.

"Cell of seclusion,
Haunt of old time,
Rid of confusion,
Empty of crime;
Landscape where the richest element
Is a little sunshine innocent.

"In thy insidious marsh,
In thy cold, opaque wood,
Thy artless meadows,
And forked orchard's writhing mood,
Still Baker Farm!
There lies in thee a fourfold charm.

"And here a poet builded
In the completed years, —
For behold! a trivial cabin
That to destruction steers.
And west trends blue Fairhaven bay,
O'er whose stained rocks the white pines sway;
And south slopes Nobscot grand,
And north the still Cliffs stand.

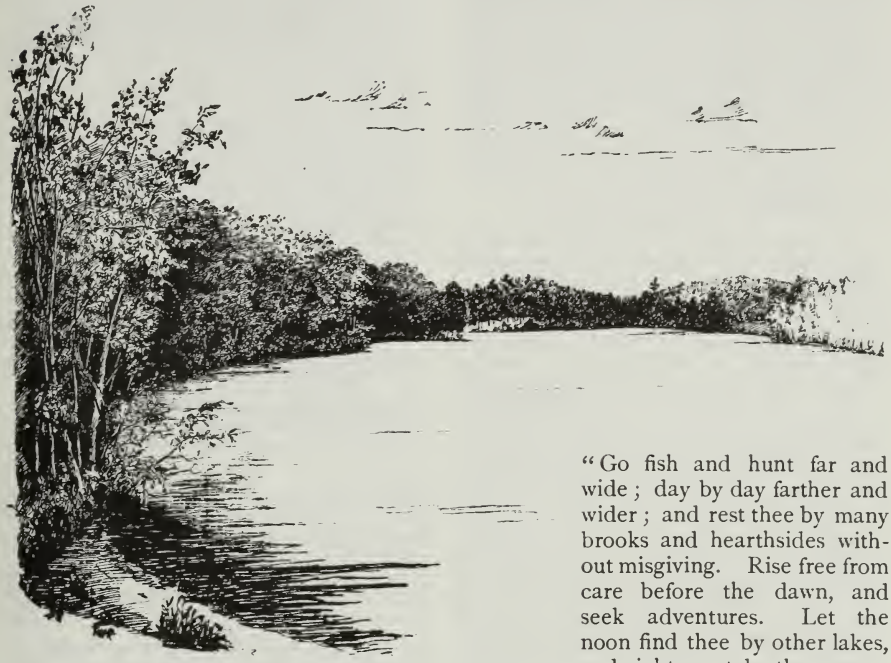
"Pan of unwrinkled cream,
May some poet dash thee in his churn!
And, with thy beauty mad,
Verse thee in rhymes that burn,—
Thy beauty — the beauty of Baker Farm —



In the drying field,
And the knotty tree,
In hassock and bield,
And marshes at sea.

"Idleness is in thy preaching,
Simpleness is all thy teaching!
Churches in these steepled woods,
Galleries of green solitudes,
Fretted never by a noise, —
Eloquence that each enjoys.
Come ye who love
And ye who hate,
Children of the holy Dove,
And Guy Faux of the State,
And hang conspiracies
From the tough rafters of the trees!

erel, wading in retired meadows, in sloughs and bog-holes, in forlorn and savage places, appeared for an instant trivial to me, who had been sent to school and college. But as I ran down the hill towards the reddening west, with the rainbow over my shoulder, and some faint tinkling sounds borne to my ear through the cleansed air from I know not what quarter, my good genius seemed to say, —



White Pond.

"Still Baker Farm!
So fair a lesson thou dost set,
Lesson no one may forget:
Commensurately wise,
Consistent sanctities;
Value that cannot be spent,
Volume that cannot be lent,
For Heaven thou art meant!"

What a medley of thoughts! you will say, — what a kaleidoscope of pictures! Yet all this could that tranquil scenery suggest to the imaginative soul, — to

"That inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude."

Thoreau himself was inspired by it, when he said: "My haste to catch pick-

"Go fish and hunt far and wide; day by day farther and wider; and rest thee by many brooks and hearthsides without misgiving. Rise free from care before the dawn, and seek adventures. Let the noon find thee by other lakes, and night overtake thee everywhere at home. There are no larger fields than these, — no worthier games than may here be played." And indeed, such was Thoreau's life, as we look back upon it, — a game played in the great fields of Nature, — a ramble through time and eternity, where each locality, like these environs of Concord, became by turns magically vast and magically small, — the macrocosm and the microcosm of the Universe.

Crossing by boat to Conantum, from Baker Farm, (which is in the town of Lincoln) a short mile took Emerson and his friends to White Pond, in the south-west corner of Concord, near to Sudbury. This was one of their less frequent resorts, but of an unequalled beauty in certain

days. Thoreau said of it: "As at Walden, in sultry dog-day weather, looking down through the woods on some of its bays, its waters are of a misty bluish-green or glaucous color. One who frequents it proposes to call it Virid Lake." This was Channing, no doubt, who had an artist's eye for color, and could lead his companion where the loveliest effects were always to be seen. How much of Channing and how much of Emerson enters into the description which they both gave of this lake, after their visit in 1848, it would be hard to say, — but thus it stands in Emerson's journal, which often owed some of its best suggestions, but never its best periods to Channing's, or Thoreau's perceptive and creative imagination:

"Another walk with Ellery Channing, well worth commemoration, if that were possible; but no pen could write what we saw; it needs the pencils of all the painters that ever existed to aid the description. We went to White Pond, a pretty little Indian bath, lonely now as Walden once was; we could almost see the sachem in his canoe in a shadowy cove. Making the circuit of the lake, on the shore, we came at last to see some marvellous reflections of the colored woods in the water, of such singular beauty and novelty that they held us fast to the spot, almost to the going down of the sun. The water was very slightly rippled, which took their proper character from the pines, birches and few oaks which composed the grove; and the submarine wood seemed all made of Lombardy poplar, with such delicious green, stained by gleams of mahogany from the oaks, and streaks of white from the birches, — every moment growing more excellent. It was the world seen through a prism, and set Ellery on wonderful Lucretian theories of 'law and design.' For how many ages of lovely days has that pretty wilderness of White Pond received the sun and clouds into its transparencies, and woven each day new webs of birch and pine, — shooting into wilder angles and more fantastic crossings of these coarse threads, which in the water, have such momentary elegance."

But Channing, twenty years later, after Thoreau's death, himself described White Pond in a poem, from which a few well-picturing or pathetic verses may be quoted:

"Gem of the wood, and playmate of the sky,
How glad on thee we rest a weary eye!
When the late plowman from the field goes home,
And leaves us free thy solitudes to roam.
Who haunts thy woodpath? ne'er in summer pressed
Save by the rabbit's foot, the pheasant's breast;
Naught save the blue kingfisher rattling past,
Or leaping frog that breaks his lengthened fast;
Naught save the falling hues, when Autumn's sigh
Beguiles the maples to a sad reply,
Or some peculiar air a sapless leaf
Guides o'er thy ocean by its compass brief.
Save One whom often here glad Nature found
Seated beneath yon thorn, or on the ground
Poring content, when frosty Autumn bore
Of wilding fruit to Earth that bitter store.
O, welcome He to thrush and various jay,
And echoing every period of the day,—
To each clear hyla trilling the new spring,
And late gray goose, buoyed on his icy wing!
With thee He is associate. Hence I love
Thy gleams, White Pond! thy dark familiar grove,
Thy deep green shadows, clefts of pasture-ground, —
Mayhap a distant bleat the single sound,
One distant cloud the sailor of the sky,
One voice — to which my inmost thoughts reply."

The places already mentioned were of those which Emerson and his friends most frequented, but there were others — the Cliffs and Nashawtuc, overlooking the river, along which, oftentimes their path was the wake of their boat; the Walden woods and the Hill of Three Friends — Emerson, Channing, and Thoreau — rising above the Pond; the Great Meadows, the Estabrook country, Mason's pasture, Flint's Pond, Bateman's Pond, the banks of the Assabet, and the hill Anursnac towering above it, the highest in Concord. These and many another rural scene rise in the memory as I recall the hundreds of rambles I have taken with these friends, or heard them describe. The spirit of the landscape has been given by each writer in many detached sketches, some of which I have cited, — by Emerson, Alcott, Hawthorne, Channing and Thoreau, — and these have become a familiar portion of our literature. But a youthful and unknown poet, who sang sweetly, but for too short a season, has conveyed in pleasing verse his perception of the whole scene amidst

which these famous men moved for so many years. Something of Keats's echoes through the stanzas wherein he portrays the experiences and dreams of boyhood.

CONCORD RIVER.

"Gently the River, with an even flow,
Marks the broad plain of grassy meadow-land,
Or, swifter moving when the March winds blow,
Casts on its bank faint lines of shining sand;
But fairest when, by summer zephyrs fanned,
Agleam with the last glow of dying day,
Gold dints appear amid the billowy gray.

"As the months pass, the stream gives new delight;
For ere the springtime's early freshness fades,
When May's soft fingers, healing Winter's blight,
Open young buds in the far woodland glades,
There shoots the water-grass, with slender blades;
And violets don their purple-tinted robes,
Whereon the dewdrops hang their pearly globes.

"Or when hot Summer comes across the hills, —
Her wavy locks with roses white and red,
With scarlet poppies whence soft sleep distills,
And with imperial lilies garlanded, —
She who rich odors all around doth shed, —
Then soothing 'tis, where trees arch overhead,
To moor the floating skiff, and idly lie,
Watching the birds high-soaring in the sky.

"And next, when Autumn, his dark temples crowned
With vine-leaves, through the sere brown meadow wends,
When woods re-echo to the baying hound,
And the light leaf slow to the stream descends;
Where the tall gracile elm his branches bends,
Great joy it is along the bank to stray,
Culling the feathery grasses on the way.

"Or last, when Winter binds the river bright
With hard and gleaming ice — a swift-forged chain —
Even in that chill season 'tis delight,
To roam across that broad and glittering plain,
Or skim its surface, as the short days wane,
Gliding along with swift and steel-bound feet:
— Truly, the changes of the year are sweet! "

I have skated with Emerson on Walden, and with Thoreau on the Musketaquid; have swum with Alcott in the green water of Thoreau's Cove, and with Thoreau himself in the Assabet; with Channing in every stream and lake of Concord.

The view of the Concord River given in this article is of that part of the stream, before the Assabet falls into it, where Thoreau most frequently sailed in his boat, and along which, or in sight of which, he preferred to ramble. This long reach of the river lay to the west and southwest of his various homes in the village, and therefore it was in this direction that he instinctively turned, as he said in one of his essays:

"When I go out of the house for a walk, uncertain as yet whither I will bend my steps, and submit myself to my instinct to decide for me, I find, strange and whimsical as it may seem, that I finally and inevitably settle southwest. My needle is slow to settle, — varies a few degrees, and does not always point due southwest; but it always settles between west and south-southwest. The future lies that way to me, and the earth seems more unexhausted and richer on that side. Eastward I go only by force; but westward I go free."

The river in a flood, Thoreau said:

"Sleeps from Nashawtuc to the Cliff
Unruffled by a single skiff."

It is this very reach, "from Nashawtuc to the Cliff," that is pictured; and along this Thoreau's Worcester friends, Blake and Brown, used to come skating in the winter, accompanied by him on their return trip.

These men were followers of Nature in all her recesses, and lovers of whatever she could show of glad or sad. In contrast with the smooth youthfulness of the verses just cited, let us read Channing's "Flight of the Wild Geese," which Emerson kept in his portfolio for years, hoping to find the right syllables to represent the cry of that migrating bird, — and finally printed it in his "Parnassus" without the expressive chorus:

"Rambling along the marshes
On the bank of the Assabet,
Sounding myself as to how it went,
Praying that I might not forget,
And all uncertain
Whether I was in the right
Toiling to lift Time's curtain, —
And if I burnt the strongest light, —
Suddenly, high in the air,
I heard the travelled geese their overture prepare.

"Stirred above this patchèd ball
The wild geese flew, —
(Not half so wild as that doth me befall
Or, swollen Wisdom, you.)
In the front there fetched a leader,
Him behind the line spread out,
And waved about, —
For 'twas near night,
When these air-pilots stop their flight,

"Cruising off the shoal dominion
Where we sit;
Depending not on their opinion,
Nor hiving sops of wit;
Geographical in tact,
Naming not a pond or river,
Pulled with twilight down, in fact,
Mid the reeds to quack and quiver, —
There they go,
Southward in a row, —
Spectators at the play below.

"Mute the listening nations stand
On the dark receding land:
How faint their villages and towns
Scattered on the misty downs!
A meeting-house
Appears no bigger than a mouse.
How long?
Never is the question asked,
While a throat can lift the song,
Or a flapping wing be tasked.
'Flutter not about a place,
Ye concomitants of space!'

"Then once more I heard them say, —
'Tis a smooth, delightful road,
Difficult to lose the way,
And a trifle for a load.'"

Is there not something peculiar to Concord in these rude verses, pregnant with thought, and now and then giving birth to some happiest phrase like that in the concluding lines? Yet there was truth and pertinence in what Emerson wrote about himself and others, in 1847:

"We get our education ended a little too quick in this country. As soon as we have learned to read and write and cipher, we are dismissed from school and set up for ourselves; we are writers and readers of opinion, and we write away without check of any kind, — play what prank, indulge what spleen or oddity, or obstinacy comes into our dear head, and even feel our complacency therein; and thus fine wits come to nothing. We are wits of the provinces, Cæsars in Arden, who lie on our oars with the fame of the villages."

It would have benefited the Concord authors to come more in contact with men of the same genius who were their equals, and to live less with one another. But it was peculiarly the fate of their genius to be solitary, to be ever "toiling to lift Time's curtain," and querying whether they "burned the strongest light." It was a clear and ardent light which they kindled, to be sure, and one that shows no sign of going out, but of leading men further on,

"As shepherd's lamp on far hillside
Seems, by the traveller espied,
A door into the mountain's heart."

After all, the interest of the Concord pilgrimage centres about Walden, where Emerson walked in his own pine wood, and where Thoreau dwelt for many months, and entertained his friends in his little cabin. His going there was determined partly by his early love for that fair water, and partly by the fact that Emerson, a year before, had bought land there. In October, 1844, Emerson wrote to his brother William:

"In one of my solitary wood-walks by Walden Pond, I met two or three men who told me they had come there to sell and to buy a field, on which they wished me to bid as purchaser. As it was on the shore of the pond, and now for years I had a sort of daily occupancy in it, I bought it — eleven acres, for $8.10 an acre. The next day I carried some of my well-beloved gossips to the place, [Thoreau was one of them, no doubt], and they deciding that the field was not good for anything if Hartwell Bigelow should cut down his pine grove, I bought for $125 more, his pretty wood-lot of three or four acres; and am now landlord and water-lord of fourteen acres, more or less, on the shore of Walden, and can raise my own blackberries."

This "field" of 1844 has now become a grove, and where Thoreau used to sit in his cabin-door and look out upon the pond, trees have grown up that hide all but a glimpse of the water from the pilgrim-visitor who goes to add a stone to the cairn that now marks the site of the hut. It was the next spring after this purchase that Thoreau, then twenty-seven years old, borrowed an axe of Mr. Alcott and went into the new wood lot to cut the timber for his house. He encamped there more than two years, but in that time made one of his journeys to the Maine woods; and when he left Walden, he went to live in Emerson's house, during its master's absence in Europe. Emerson sailed Oct. 5, 1847, and this was a month later than Thoreau's withdrawal from the woods, which took place Sept. 6. The cabin was sold to a gardener, and afterwards became the property of a farmer in the northwest corner of Concord, three or four miles from its original site. There it stood, not far from Estabrook Farm, one of the more distant resorts of the walkers, until

by neglect and decay it fell in pieces soon after Thoreau's death in 1862.

Long after Thoreau left his hermitage, Emerson added to his possessions a larger tract of woodland on the south shore of the pond, opposite his first purchase, and commanding, from a rocky ledge, not only a view of Walden, but a glimpse of the western hills, toward which he loved to look off. Here he planned to build a lodge for outlook and retirement, in the midst of what he called his "garden," — but the plan was never realized. He describes this ridge in these lines:

"My garden is a forest-ledge,
Which older forests bound;
The banks slope down to the blue lake-edge,
Then plunge to depths profound.

"Waters that wash my garden-side
Play not in Nature's lawful web,
They heed not moon or solar tide, —
Five years elapse from flood to ebb."

This mystical account alludes to the irregular rise and fall of the water in Walden, which will often be high when the neighboring river is lowest, and low when the river floods all the meadows. The rise and fall of the pond is six or seven feet, and it only reaches its very lowest level once in fifty or sixty years. Thoreau says in "Walden:"

"There is a narrow sand bar running into it, with very deep water on one side, on which I helped boil a kettle of chowder, some six rods from the main shore, about the year 1824, which it has not been possible to do for twenty-five years."

That is in 1852. But about 1885 this sand bar emerged again from the water, so that a chowder could have been made on the very spot where young Henry partook of it with his father and mother sixty years before. At present (1890) the pond is almost at its highest level again, so that I lately waded knee deep where I have often walked dry shod.

To none of his haunts in wood and field did Emerson go so much as to Walden and its groves. I have often walked the circuit of the pond with him, — passing up the Lincoln Road till we came to the wood path that led to his "forest-ledge," then descending from that height to the railroad track, and walking along that, across the southwest side of the water, and returning on the north side, through the pine wood above Thoreau's Cove. Once as we walked along the track, Emerson stooped and picked up a stone which he threw into the green water, and as he did so, recited to me the verse which he had not then printed, —

"He smote the lake to feed his eye
With the *emerald gleam* of the broken wave;
He flung in pebbles well to hear
The moment's music which they gave."

When I saw these lines in print, he had changed the expression to "beryl beam," — but I thought the first form of it more descriptive.

When Walt Whitman paid his first and only visit to Concord, in 1881, he made his pilgrimage to Walden, after having taken part in a conversation on Thoreau, and other authors the previous evening. There had been a great attraction between himself and Thoreau, when they first met in 1856, at New York or Brooklyn, and for a long time after Thoreau's return home from that New York visit, he had much to say concerning Whitman. He admired the poet and the man even more than did Emerson, who was at first and long continued to be deeply impressed with Whitman's genius. Emerson gave me the first edition of "Leaves of Grass" in 1855, when it came out, and as we were walking together that summer, talked to me in warm praise of it — calling it "a mixture of the Bhagavat Ghita and the New York *Herald*." In 1862 when Thoreau died, Emerson gave the eulogy at his funeral, and in it he said, "Three persons made a profound impression on Thoreau in these later years, — John Brown, Joe Polis, his Indian guide, and *another person not known to this audience*." I did not know who was meant, but not long after, when Emerson had been looking over the journals and letters of Thoreau, with a view to their publication, he told me that the third person whom Thoreau admired was Whitman. I said, "But you omitted that striking remark when you printed your eulogy" — for it does not appear there. Emerson replied, "When I told Sophia Thoreau that this third person was Whitman, she ques-

tioned the fact of her brother's admiration, and so I omitted the passage. But now that I have read Thoreau's journals, I see that I was right, and Sophia was wrong, — I had not overstated the feeling of Henry for Whitman."

Nor is it easy to overstate the regard which Emerson felt for Thoreau, for Alcott, and for his other chosen companions. They were associated in his thought, as he in theirs, with all that is loveliest in Nature, all that is most inward in the life of the soul. There is a passage in Emerson's journal for June, 1841, quoted in Dr. Emerson's biography, with which these random memories may fitly close, since it ends with one of his starry sentences, reminding those who knew him, of that nightly observance or worship of the stars, which was long a part of his life.

"The good river-god has taken the form of my valiant Henry Thoreau here, and introduced me to the riches of his shadowy, starlit, moonlit stream, — a lovely new world lying as close, and yet as unknown, to this vulgar trite one of streets and shops, as death to life, or poetry to prose. Through one field we went to the boat, and then left all time, all science, all history behind us, and entered into nature with one stroke of a paddle. Take care, good friend! I said, as I looked west into the sunset overhead and underneath, and he, with his face towards me rowed towards it. — Take care; you know not what you do, dipping your wooden oar into this enchanted liquid, painted with all reds and purples and yellows, which glows under and behind you. Presently this glory faded, and the stars came and said, Here we are. These beguiling stars, soothsaying, flattering, persuading, who, though their promise was never yet made good in human experience, are not to be contradicted, not to be insulted, nay, not even to be disbelieved by us. All experience is against them, — yet their word is Hope, and shall still forever leave experience a liar."

> "The sun set — but set not his hope;
> Stars rose — his faith was earlier up,
> Fixed on the enormous galaxy
> Deeper and older seemed his eye;
> And matched his sufferance sublime
> The taciturnity of time."

THE OLD MANSE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MR. WILFRED A. FRENCH.

RECOLLECTIONS OF FRANK SANBORN SEVENTY YEARS AGO

by Pearl Swain Marston

[Note: This childhood memory of Frank Sanborn's last visit to his birthplace, Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, in 1916 was written out in April 1981 by Pearl Swain Marston, also a native of Hampton Falls, and was passed along to us by her friend Peter W. Stine.]

My recollections of Frank B. Sanborn are those of a young child, but seem to be similar to those of my contemporaries who remember his frequent visits here.

Living with my Grandfather in his Victorian home at a time when automobile travel was in its infancy gave me the unusual opportunity of meeting many of his distinguished friends. Perhaps it was because "Cousin Frank" came on foot that I particularly remember him. I well recall someone's calling, "Here comes Frank," and, on looking out the west kitchen window, seeing a tall, slender figure. It was somewhat bent, and as it approached I could see a staff of some sort in the hand. From his picture that appears to be a tightly rolled umbrella. Perhaps it was the gold-headed cane mentioned by his son Victor in his tribute (Hampton Falls History, Vol. 2). It may well be that he wanted to show it to Cousin Warren Brown who was a little later to have a similar honor bestowed by the N.H. Lesiglature. Whether Frank actually depended on the support or carried it from habit, I can't really tell, but all who recall him remember the staff.

His hair, rather unkempt and tousled, made me think of a large, shaggy dog. His eyes, so like my Grandfather's, were piercing, though kindly, and so was the hand that patted my head as Grandfather proudly presented his little Pearl and Grandson Kenny. We were always on hand to greet his guests!

Frank and Grandfather then shut themselves in the library where they were busy till dinner time, doubtless planning the volume they planned to write together but which Grandpa had to write alone.

The visit must have been pre-planned as we had "company supper" (not dinner) in the spacious dining room with Grandpa at the head of the long table. There was doubtless very interesting conversation following the meal, probably by firelight, but my brother Ken and I went to bed at our usual time.

Grandmother's diary for September 7, 1916, reads thus: "Mr. Frank Sanborn came to visit. Dined and stayed overnight. He went to the beach today to hear Mr. Hughes* speak. It was thought there were 75,000 in the crowd. Frank left at 5 P.M." (By street car?)

My last memory of Frank concerns the news of the tragic accident at the Concord R.R. Station† and later death.

Now I wonder who took the picture at the old house on that last visit--few of us had cameras at that time. The house, in a dreadful state of disrepair, must have been vacant as it usually was in my childhood. Frank's last sister "Miss Helen" had died in 1910. That last visit must have been a sad occasion.

Mary Creighton recalls other visits when Frank walked past the Town Hall on his daily trips to the post office, always with his characteristic stoop, his tightly rolled umbrella and his beaten-up old hat.

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*Charles Evans Hughes who ran for President on the Republican ticket in 1916.

†Sanborn was struck by a baggage cart at the Plainfield, New Jersey Railroad Station on January 18, 1917. He died five weeks later. (ed.)

SOPHIA HAWTHORNE AND LOUISA MAY ALCOTT'S "THOREAU'S FLUTE"

by Francis B. Dedmond

Almost all of the biographers of Louisa May Alcott mention the circumstances that called forth her "Thoreau's Flute" and something of the part Sophia Hawthorne played in its publication. Cornelia Meigs says that, during one of her rare quiet hours as she watched over the sick in the Georgetown Hospital, Louisa composed some lines on the recent death of Thoreau, the "shy genius whom all loved so dearly."[1] Madeline B. Stern says that there in the hospital Louisa thought much of Concord, and "more than ever she thought now of Mr. Thoreau, to whom Concord had been the world. As she thought, watching beside the bed of a one-legged lad dying of wound fever,[2] a poem sang itself in her mind, to him, the Pan who was not dead, whose flute, as some had said, still whispered music on the air, whose name was written down in violets, who could not ever die."[3]

But Louisa May too became ill, and "in the stress of what came later,"[4] she forgot the lines. But by March, 1863, back in Concord and recovering, she, according to Belle Moses, "began to dust her books, [and] clean out her piece-bags,"[5] and, according to Cornelia Meigs, "by April, she was able to drive and even to walk a little in the garden and along the road under the apple trees."[6] Both of these biographers indicate that, with returning health, she recalled her lines on Thoreau and wrote them down. Cornelia Meigs then tells anew the story earlier told by Julian Hawthorne. It seems that, on a warm summer evening as the Hawthornes sat within their old Hillside house, they heard light steps on the porch, but no one knocked or rang the bell. After a while, Julian went to the door and found, thrust under the crack, a folded paper, which he brought to his father. It was Louisa's "Thoreau's Flute."[7]

But, as is generally known, it was Mrs. Hawthorne who urged James T. Fields, editor of the Atlantic Monthly, to publish the

poem. However, Sophia Hawthorne's strategy of using uxorious pressure is revealed for the first time in the two heretofore unpublished letters from Mrs. Hawthorne to Mrs. Fields. On 14 June 1863, Sophia wrote to "Dearest Annie":

> I have obtained from Louisa Alcott the poem about Mr. Thoreau, of which I spoke to Mr. Fields. He thought Mr. Alcott's reading might have bed—d me so much that I could not tell quite whether it were good or no. But upon quietly reading it to myself, I find it really eminently beautiful in form, expression and thought - and I wish you would read it to yourself, and then to your husband aloud in your own exquisite way - so that the full beauty of it may strike him. I am sure you will both agree with me that it is worthy the best place it can be put into, and so I hope Mr. Fields will let it go into the Atlantic that Louisa may have the honor as well as the pecuniary benefit. I will copy it upon the opposite leaf. It is altogether in a superior tone to any thing I have ever seen of her - so sweet, majestic and calm and serious. She never wrote it down till after recovering from her severe illness, it being an inspiration one Midnight at Georgetown. It is so seldom that poetry is written, that I am always deeply moved when I find it not criticizable. We do love to be commanded, when the potentate has legitimate power. But the loyal soul is very restive under illegitimate assumption[,] is it not?[8]

The next day Sophia got off another hurried letter to Annie Fields.

> My dear Mrs. Fields --
>
> In copying Louisa's poem I made a mistake what I hasten to rectify. She herself first wrote "turned" in the line
>
> "And turned to poetry life's prose,"
>
> but afterwards erased the r, so that it should read "tuned"
>
> "And tuned to poetry life's prose."
>
> "Tuned" is so much better that I am afraid I shall be assassinated by some member of the A. family if it be printed "turned" through my instrumentality & I rush to acquaint you with my error.

Not time for another word except

Most truly yours

S. Hawthorne

15th June
Monday[9]

"Thoreau's Flute" was published in the September 1863 issue of the Atlantic with "turned" properly changed to "tuned."[10]

Endnotes

[1]Cornelia Meigs, Invincible Louisa (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1933), p. 168.

[2]See Louisa May Alcott, Hospital Sketches, ed. E. S. Miers. New York: Sagamore Press, 1957

[3]Madeline B. Stern, Louisa May Alcott (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1950), p. 124.

[4]Meigs, p. 168.

[5]Belle Moses, Louisa May Alcott: Dreamer and Worker - A Story of Achievement (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1909), p. 151.

[6]Meigs, p. 168.

[7]See Meigs, pp. 168-169.

[8]Sophia Hawthorne to Annie Fields, Concord, 14 June 1863, Boston Public Library (Ms. C. 1.11 [34]). Published with permission.

[9]Sophia Hawthorne to Annie Fields, Concord, 15 June 1863, Boston Public Library (Ms. C. 1.11 [34]). Published with permission.

[10]Atlantic Monthly, XII (September, 1863), 280-281.

THOREAU'S FLUTE.

We, sighing, said, "Our Pan is dead;
His pipe hangs mute beside the river;—
Around it wistful sunbeams quiver,
But Music's airy voice is fled.
Spring mourns as for untimely frost;
The bluebird chants a requiem;
The willow-blossom waits for him;—
The Genius of the wood is lost."

Then from the flute, untouched by hands,
There came a low, harmonious breath:
"For such as he there is no death;—
His life the eternal life commands;
Above man's aims his nature rose:
The wisdom of a just content
Made one small spot a continent,
And tuned to poetry Life's prose.

"Haunting the hills, the stream, the wild,
Swallow and aster, lake and pine,
To him grew human or divine,—
Fit mates for this large-hearted child.
Such homage Nature ne'er forgets,
And yearly on the coverlid
'Neath which her darling lieth hid
Will write his name in violets.

"To him no vain regrets belong,
Whose soul, that finer instrument,
Gave to the world no poor lament,
But wood-notes ever sweet and strong.
O lonely friend! he still will be
A potent presence, though unseen,—
Steadfast, sagacious, and serene:
Seek not for him,—he is with thee."

THE WILDEST COUNTRY: A GUIDE TO THOREAU'S MAINE

by J. Parker Huber
Appalachian Mountain Club, 1981. pp. xvi, 198. $11.95

by Mary P. Sherwood

If this handsome book is first a canoe guide, it is also, if you don't mind a realignment of events, the best modern tale of Henry Thoreau's three boat trips into the Maine wilderness. Huber's story is alluring because he has added the latest information on dams, waterway conditions, locations of present-day residents in isolated spots, as well as ample historical information. Reading Huber's "grand tour" of Thoreau's major route is like experiencing a drama unfolding on a time-stage of over a hundred years. There are few errors of the kind which trip smooth reading.

The book is a plum pudding of many goodies. Quotes from Thoreau's The Maine Woods are aptly placed. There are attractive, easy-to-identify wildflower, tree, and bird drawings in the margins and unexpected photographs from historical society and library files. (One could wish, though, that a picture of Joe Polis's gravestone on Indian Island, so easy to approach with a camera, were included with that of Aittean's.) The maps are a delight to a map-reader; their soft but clever shading gives almost a third dimension to the hills above the lakes and streams. The maps fit the text descriptions

better than most such inserted guide maps, with only three or four place names left out in all of that mileage. This reviewer would have preferred, however, that the map on page 22 (Kineo Peninsula) precede the one on page 16 (Moosehead Lake).

The author breathes life into the book with his own observations along the waterways, for he had canoed over them many times, first as a member of a small group, then as a leader of groups. Though professionally a history teacher, Huber obviously has long been a student of nature. This lifts his text above the pedantic. Huber's accounts of his own inner - as well as outer - experiences reflect his empathy with Thoreau the nature lover. Huber has surpassed the literary researchers of Thoreau's Maine with his successful ferreting out in libraries and record offices of numerous facts which have eluded others. For his source he has used Moldenhauer's 1972 edition of Thoreau's The Maine Woods and Allen's 1906 edition of Thoreau's Journal.

We learn as from a textbook but with almost the smooth reading of an historical novel. Huber tells us that Kineo flint is not the greatest deposit in Maine, that moose continue their ancient way of life in the Maine wilderness, that the McBurnie family now runs the Chesuncook Hotel which was Ansel Smith's in Thoreau's time, and that Smith died in 1879. We learn much about the Maine Woods teas which Thoreau wrote about. Huber alerts us that Mud Pond Carry is filling in as eventually happens to all glacially-dammed shallow waters. We learn that twentieth-century pioneers named Nugent offer housekeeping cabins at Chamberlain Lake, that an amazing tramway existed for a while between Eagle Lake and Chamberlain Lake early in this century, that there now exist two official campsites in this area, one a Maine Warden Office, the other the Allagash Wilderness Waterway Headquarters, that it was in 1966 that the Maine State Legislature created the Allagash Wilderness Waterway, a "wilderness" stream which now attracts thousands of boaters. We had learned from Thoreau that in 1842 Telos Dam was created to divert log-rush water from the Allagash to the Penobscot Valley; now Huber informs us that the dam was rebuilt in 1941 and gives us options for getting around it.

The author brings us up to date with information on Webster Lake and its portages, now within the boundaries of Baxter State Park. The fire-ravaged landscape reported by Thoreau is now healed, covered with green forest and its associated ground cover plants. Huber gets us informatively through to Grand Lake Matagamon on the East Branch of the Penobscot River, thence to Thoreau Island and on to Hunt'd Farm, and along to Medway where a modern highway now brings in anyone with powered wheels.

Some readers might be uncomfortable with Huber's decision to leave the details of Thoreau's West Branch trip of 1846 to near the end of the book, but Huber prefers to present a long, uninterrupted route as the basis of his story without having to retrace Thoreau's steps, as Thoreau himself did in several places. It is true that by finding Henry Thoreau's very first trip into the Maine Wilderness at the end the reader loses the sense of first new adventure. The same happens when Huber puts the climb up Mt. Katahdin at the end of the book, like a novelist leaving the climax of the story to the end. But the author apparently assumes that anyone interested in following

Thoreau's footsteps in northern Maine has read The Maine Woods to start with. Anyone who doesn't do that first misses the soul of the waterways. This book is intended to be a canoe guide first, and the arrangement of its information permits boaters to select segments of the route best suited to their time and physical limitations.

The author includes seven very helpful chronological itinerary tables, but, as indicated above, some readers might object to the order in which Huber presents them and their accompanying text. For easy comparison, however, Huber does assemble the tables of the three trips--1846, 1853, 1857--in the first chapter. Included at the back of the book are "Notes" which give added information for each chapter, and at the end of each chapter there are the most useful references.

Just prior to the federal government's announcement of plans to consider an Allagash Wilderness Waterway, a group of students and faculty at the University of Maine considered working out a canoe guide to follow Thoreau's trips. But they decided that they didn't want to be instrumental in luring too many people into that wilderness area. Just as they abandoned their guide plan the Allagash Wilderness Waterway began to take shape. That soon opened up the Maine wilderness like breaking down a flood gate, so we can't fault Huber for seeing and following through on the opportunity for creating a boating guide for the Thoreau wilderness area. Compared to what is happening along the Allagash, the Thoreau-Huber waterways attract, for the most part, those people willing to suffer, as real explorers expect to, and to be more careful of the environment than the pampered mobs running the Allagash. Huber's book, being a holistic approach, was worth waiting for.

THE CURATOR'S CORNER

Toward the end of May your curator received an unusual request which should interest all Thoreauvians: We were asked by the Mayor of Itanhaem, Brazil, to place flowers, on his behalf, at Henry Thoreau's grave on June 5, World Environment Day.

The message was relayed to us by Judith Hurley of Shutesbury, Massachusetts, who had recently returned from attending a hearing on nuclear energy at the State Legislature in Sao Paola, Brazil. She wrote us that Ernesto Zwarg, President of the Society for Ecology, the Landscape and Humanism, is one of "the very few holders of public office who have come out strongly against the development of nuclear power in Brazil!" She added that Mayor Zwarg is "a strong internationalist as well as an environmentalist in concern and action."

Since we felt that a permanent planting rather than cut flowers would be more appropriate for this occasion and, since the Town Engineer had given us permission, we decided to plant a Hatfield yew at the left rear corner of the Thoreau lot behind the

little marker that says "Henry." In order to share this gesture of international friendship and concern, we invited Berry Shea, the Editor of the Concord Journal, to attend. She was so impressed that she not only printed a picture of the planting but also added her approval in an editorial comment.

During the planting we heard, then saw, a scarlet tanager overhead in a towering pine. That evening the curator's husband and back-up man found the following quotations in Thoreau on Birds by Helen Cruikshank (New York, 1964):

> May 20, 1853 "Saw a tanager in Sleepy Hollow. It most takes the eye of any bird. . . . It flies through the green foliage as if it would ignite the leaves."
>
> May 23, 1853 "At Loring's Wood and saw a tanager. What a contrast of a red bird with the green pines and the blue sky! . . . This and the emperor moth make the tropical phenomena of our zone. There is warmth in the pewee's strain, but this bird's colors and his note tell of Brazil."